

§ 106-665. Plant food deficiency.

(a) The Commissioner, in determining for administrative purposes, whether any commercial fertilizer is deficient in plant food, shall be guided solely by the official sample as defined in subdivision (15) of G.S. 106-657, and as provided for in subsections (b), (c), and (d) of G.S. 106-662.

(b) If the analysis shall show that any commercial fertilizer falls short of the guaranteed analysis in any ingredient, a penalty shall be assessed in accordance with the following provisions:

- (1) For total nitrogen, available phosphate, or available potash: A penalty of three times the value of the deficiency if the deficiency is in excess of the following investigational allowances.

Guarantee Percentage	Total Nitrogen	Available Phosphate	Soluble Potash Percentage
4 or less	0.49	0.67	0.41
5	0.51	0.67	0.43
6	0.52	0.67	0.47
7	0.54	0.68	0.53
8	0.55	0.68	0.60
9	0.57	0.68	0.65
10	0.58	0.69	0.70
12	0.61	0.69	0.79
14	0.63	0.70	0.87
16	0.67	0.70	0.94
18	0.70	0.71	1.01
20	0.73	0.72	1.08
22	0.75	0.72	1.15
24	0.78	0.73	1.21
26	0.81	0.73	1.27
28	0.83	0.74	1.33
30	0.86	0.75	1.39
32 or more	0.88	0.76	1.44

Provided that when the found relative value of a sample is equal to or exceeds the guaranteed relative value, an overage in primary nutrients may compensate for a deficiency in another primary nutrient up to 10% of the guarantee of the deficient nutrient, not to exceed two units. No compensation shall be allowed toward a deficiency if the overage does not compensate for the entire amount of the deficiency or if the deficiency exceeds 10% of the guarantee or the deficiency exceeds two units. If more than one primary nutrient is in penalty status, no compensation shall be allowed.

- (2) Should the basicity or acidity as equivalent of calcium carbonate of any sample of fertilizer be found upon analysis to differ more than five percent (5%) (or 100 pounds of calcium carbonate equivalent per ton) from the guarantee, a penalty of fifty cents (50¢) per ton for each 50 pounds calcium carbonate equivalent, or fraction thereof in excess of the 100 pounds allowed, shall be assessed and paid as is prescribed in subsection (c) of this section.
- (3) Chlorine: If the chlorine content of any lot of fertilizer branded for tobacco shall exceed the maximum amount guaranteed by more than 0.5 of one

percent, a penalty shall be assessed equal to ten percent (10%) of the value of the fertilizer for each additional 0.5 of one percent of excess or fraction thereof.

- (4) Water insoluble nitrogen: A penalty of three times the value of the deficiency shall be assessed, if such deficiency is in excess of 0.15 of one percent on goods guaranteed up to and including five-tenths percent; 0.20 of one percent on goods guaranteed from five-tenths percent to one percent; 0.30 of one percent on goods guaranteed from one percent to two percent; 0.50 of one percent on goods guaranteed above two percent and up to and including five percent; and 1.00 percent on goods guaranteed over five percent.
- (5) Nitrate nitrogen: A penalty of three times the value of the deficiency shall be assessed if the deficiency shall exceed 0.20 of one percent for goods guaranteed up to and including five-tenths percent; 0.25 of one percent for goods guaranteed from five-tenths to one percent; 0.30 of one percent for goods guaranteed from one to two percent; and 0.35 of one percent for goods guaranteed above two percent up to four percent. Tolerances for goods guaranteed above four percent shall be the same as for total nitrogen.
- (6) Total magnesium: If the magnesium content is as much as 0.2 unit plus 5 percent of the guarantee below the minimum amount guaranteed, a penalty of one dollar (\$1.00) per ton shall be assessed for each 0.15 of one percent additional deficiency or fraction thereof.
- (7) Total calcium: If the calcium content is as much as 0.2 unit plus 5 percent of the guarantee below the minimum amount guaranteed, a penalty of one dollar (\$1.00) per ton shall be assessed for each 0.35 of one percent additional deficiency or fraction thereof.
- (8) Sulfur: If the sulfur content is as much as 0.2 unit plus 5 percent of the guarantee below the minimum amount guaranteed in the case of all mixed fertilizers, including mixed fertilizers branded for tobacco, a penalty of one dollar (\$1.00) per ton for each 0.50 of one percent additional excess or fraction thereof, shall be assessed.
- (9) Deficiencies or excesses in any other constituent or constituents covered under subdivisions (6) and (7), subsection (a), G.S. 106-660 which the registrant is required to or may guarantee shall be evaluated by the Commissioner and penalties therefor shall be prescribed by the Commissioner in fertilizer regulations.
- (10) For micro-nutrients as are not specifically covered in this Article, a tolerance of twenty-five percent (25%) of the guarantee will be allowed for each element, not to exceed 1/2 unit (.5%) on guarantees up to 15 units or percent and not to exceed one unit (1%) on guarantees above 15 units or percent.

(c) All penalties assessed under this section shall be paid to the consumer of the lot of fertilizer represented by the sample analyzed within three months from the date of notice by the Commissioner to the distributor, receipts taken therefor, and promptly forwarded to the Commissioner; provided, that in no case shall the total assessed penalties exceed the commercial value of the goods to which it applies. If said consumer cannot be found, the clear proceeds of the penalty assessed shall be remitted to the Civil Penalty and Forfeiture Fund in accordance with G.S. 115C-457.2. Such sums as shall be found to be payable to consumers on lots of fertilizer against which said penalties were assessed shall not be subject to claim by the

consumer after 12 months from the date of assessment. (1947, c. 1086, s. 8; 1955, c. 354, s. 4; 1977, c. 303, s. 11; 1983, c. 146, s. 5; 1993, c. 216, s. 6; 1997-261, s. 109; 1998-215, s. 21.)